



BLUEGRAS NO. 37

Guy H. Lillian III, P.O. Box 53092 New Orleans LA 70153-3092, e-mail GHLIII@YAHOO.COM. (504) 821-2362. GHLIII Press Publication #860. For KAPA 93. Begun 3-1-98.

A variation on my usual "head"piece this time ... **Charlie Williams** provided the above for the 7th issue of my genzine, **Challenger**, which I completed, printed, collated, and mailed in late February. I am pretty well pleased by it, and since everyone in KAPA should have their copies by now, I hope you are too. LOCs welcome, contributions of other sorts also welcome, everything welcome in fact except any sort of criticism. I've given up criticism for Lent.

As you know from scanning the zine, "Born to Lose" applies not so much to me as to a client of mine for whom I won an acquittal on armed robbery charges. He really did have that tattooed on his forehead. It's my major writing in **Chall**, aside from the paean to WigWam Village I printed in mlg 91 and an editorial musing about DUFF. Hmm ... DUFF ... Should I run or shouldn't I? I will spend the rest of 1998 mulling over that question. (Roger Sims has advised me to test the Australian waters by joining ANZAPA, and so it looks like KAPA and SFPA will soon be joined by a third apa

in my repertoire. Any suggestions for an appropriate zine title?) The other material -- especially the *printed* (not xeroxed) cover, by David Cherry -- is excellent, so if you find **Challenger #7** flawed in any way, try ignoring my writing the next time you scan it. What's left is *churce*.

Spring is here and it's time for our usual recreations. How -- he asks every year -- was Con*Cave? Mardi Gras was a beautiful if rather shruggable day. I went to the fabulous French Quarter early on Fat Tuesday morning, I wandered the streets until past sundown (doing things to my feet Saddam wouldn't do to his son-in-law), I took photos of excellent costumes and naughty exhibitionist wimmen (lots of blondes in white tee-shirts this year) and enjoyed the noise and color and frivolity, but ... I had no adventures, saw next to no one I knew, and spent far too much of the day remembering better Mardis Gras past. *The years I lived in the Quarter and opened my slave-quarter pad to footsore and full-bladdered friends. The two GrasCons when I came home with my then wife, and dreamed of making a home here for her, too. The year -- long after that dream crashed and burned -- when redheaded Sandy visited, probably the best Fat Tuesday of all.* I liked this Mardi Gras -- can't help liking a cloudless day in the mid-70s! -- but regrets, there were a few. And my calves -- the ones in my legs, not the ones on my (non-existent) ranch -- still ached *days* afterward.

Let's see -- enthused reviews for **The Big Lebowski** and **Afterglow** and **Twilight**. Work natter later if I feel like it. But *first* ...

MAILING COMMENTS on KAPA 92!

Transitional Phases 35 INaomil I'm always impressed by your devotion to your critters, Stinker and the other skunks and the cats which preceded them. I'd love to have a pet but I'm a dog lover, this is the city, and hounds were meant to run and yawlp free in the fields, bedeviling butterflies and gophers, heedless of human traffic. Besides, my landlady would have a cow, increasing the menagerie. || Cheesecake ... They serve cheesecake on t'other side of the Pearly Gates. Gimme! || I wish I could have seen that innovative production of **Julius Caesar**. What I think I like best about Shakespeare is how the plays lend themselves to innovation. Nazi-like uniforms have been used before for that play; you've heard, of course, of the Mercury Theatre production by Orson Welles, with costumes and sets based on then-contemporary fascist Italy. || I liked **As Good as it Gets** a great deal, but 80% of that was because of the superb performances; the script *strained* to make Nicholson's character obnoxious at the most heartless places, and though this worked splendidly once -- when he made that remark about Helen Hunt's kid being ill: a terrific *silence* -- it got tiresome after a while. I'm really afraid Jack will take the Oscar that should go to Peter Fonda; Nicholson may be what I'm like, but Fonda plays what I *wish* I was like. I didn't like **Good Will Hunting**: it was predictable, and for a movie about a math genius, they didn't show us enough math. I'll comment on **Titanic** to Pat. || I've got to read that Carl Hiaasen interview -- and his intro to the reissued Travis McGee. I took one cue from the party gurl who approached me on the train (see last issue) and started reading Hiaasen's work. **Double Whammy**, **Stormy Weather**, **Skin Tight** ... he's terrific: funnier and better than Elmore Leonard and pushing hard on the legacy of John D. MacDonald, and that be *praise* from me. || No, you're wrong; people -- ordinary laymen -- remember the major Simpson players, including the lawyers. I've had jurors ask me, after trials, what I thought of their tactics. || I'm all for a KAPAcon to celebrate our 100th, either a special event or a con-within-a-con. I'll be there if I at all can. || Trying to remember Neal Barrett's *faux pax* [sic, and in French, yet] during the Seiun Awards ... I was so nervous, worrying about **Blue Mars**, that

I may have missed something. I recall Barrett looking rather lost, but not doing anything insulting. Certainly the presenters were as charming as ever. || The Disclave *committee* blocked rooms *for* the B&D crowd there. The *convention* acted on the behalf of the special, and especially weird, crowd that caused such havoc and damage later on. Disclave may have been able to beat a lawsuit from the hotel -- how could they anticipate that *any* group within the convention would behave so stupidly? -- but they couldn't have argued with the management had they taken a lesser measure, such as banning them from future bookings. Fortunately, that doesn't seem to have happened. || The uniforms in **Starship Troopers** didn't remind me of Nazis, but when the new helmets for *American* soldiers were introduced, 15-20 years ago, I flinched. They had that distinctive *Wermacht* design, lower over the ears than the rest of the head. Well, I guess it's simply an effective form for its purpose. || Being rude and snide -- taking pleasure in hurting someone's feelings -- is beneath a person of your gifts. Curt does indeed suffice. ~~He wrote a fine article about Lynn Hickman for **Challenger** and~~ In all seriousness, a dignified reserve is all you need to lay low offenders to your space. Such is the power of powerful women. || If an emu is what I think it is, I saw one standing by the side of the interstate the last time I drove north. Passed a llama ranch in Mississippi, too. || You were on the WigWam Committee before you were born. (I stuck you on there under the impression, from Pat, that you cast a write-in vote for the Village in the 2000 race. Don't worry; I'll make sure no one blames *you* for it.)

Bluegras no. 36 |me| Gad, my poor little manual makes *ugly* type, but through its blotchy homeliness sheer *fannishness* shines. Time, oh KAPA, to get apazinging out of the computer and back in the gutter where it belongs!

Treading Water |Betsy| The flu was *awful* this year. Even my judge missed a day of work. || Your devotion to the Girl Scouts is so admirable ... I wish I'd enjoyed the Boy Scouts more, but boys in the throes of puberty are hardly the world's most serene company. Girls, I imagine, may be different in style, but not in substance. || I'm impressed that you're reading **The Age of Innocence**, a *real* book ... I don't read real books anymore. But I am relieved to learn, a line later, that you also scan **Star Trek** novels. I tried to write one of those, once, about Saavik from **The Wrath of Khan**, and only stopped when Carolyn Clowes' **Pandora Principle**, also about Saav, was published. One scene survives ...

Kentucky Nuggets 50 |Jodie| Andy's lament on the retirement of y'all's postmaster, and the doom of a mundane address which will ensue, is heartrending. There went part of life's richness, as the bleaching flood of sameness washes yet another unique color from this world. Someday, with my luck *before* I die, we shall all be stamped with code numbers and zapped with brain-numbers from birth, individuality and singularity blotted from the face of our planet like so much dew. *Beep* || My take on the Lewinsky affair? Unprintable. From the floorful of curses, maledictions and epithets that have hurtled forth from my ratched and screeching throat towards the wingers and hypocrites who have pressed this idiocy upon Bill Clinton and his people, I lift one: *this is what it means to be the enemy of right-wing Republicans*. They attack your family, they besmirch your character, they torture the innocent -- or does anyone take seriously Kenneth Starr's claim that Monica's mama was involved in perjury? -- they befoul the media, they injure the country, because they *don't care about anything* except punishing those who best them. You realize that if Starr's actions as prosecutor were commonplace, you could be forced to reveal confidences broached to you

by *your* kids? Even one of my judges, normally to the right of *Goebbels*, has expressed florid disgust with such tactics. No, the sooner he and his witch-hunt are consigned to history's sewers, the better for everyone ... *especially* the Republicans. || John Glenn's new flight is another matter: an act of liberation for those in the later seasons of their life's year. Of course, I'm still worried about Glenn, and if anything happens to him, this second flight will be looked on much as Christa's dream is now regarded: a foolish stunt. Not by me, though. Let's give the dreamers credit, and let them dream. I remember what John Glenn meant to America 36 years ago, and I'm all for him now. || My judge who is an ex-priest didn't go directly from the clerical collar to the judicial robe: he had a law practice and service in the state legislature in between. Where he learned his unique and unfettered judicial style is anybody's guess.

Vanish with the Rose #53 |Nickil I once mailed a package of books and magazines from Greensboro North Carolina to my folks in Rio de Janeiro. They came to visit one Christmas, saying the package had never arrived. *The day after they left*, the package came back ... marked in Portuguese as undeliverable. Nothing wrong with the address, either; the Brazilians, we figured, were just being contrary. || Check out my new enthusiasm for Carl Hiaasen, above. I understand, also, that Donald Westlake has written another Parker novel, the first in umpteen years. *Not* fun reading: Parker is a grimly realistic sociopath. || No juror would likely tell himself that he was voting a particular way because he disliked the lawyer -- as in the Barry Scheck example. But if he did have residual feelings towards that attorney because of an earlier case, he just might shade his judgment according to that prejudice. Happens all the time. || So Burl Ives couldn't play Batgirl just because he's dead. You got something against the dead? Shouldn't they be treated like everybody else? I notice you didn't say that he couldn't play Batgirl -- at least successfully -- because he was a *man* and *seventy years old* when he last played a part. Perhaps you could have. Batgirl isn't a man. She's not 70 years old. Nor is she dead. *And she's not grossly out-of-shape like Alicia Silverstone was when she made her wretched movie*. Point being, if you're going to cast an actor in a part, he should *look the part*. || Road rage is a very, very scary phenomenon. I see it as another clue to the terrible fear and anger that quivers beneath the fat and satisfied surface of the current American experience. As a people, I truly fear that we are one twitch away from being at one another's throats. || At Iguacon in 1978 I kept track of how many Lukes and Leias appeared at the masquerade. Many. One poor kid came out in his judo *ki* (I believe that's the word) to a chorus of boos and stalked angrily off the stage. Maybe the worldcon was wise when they instituted pre-judging. || Not all public men who get themselves into moral/legal trouble walk away from their problems unscathed. Wilbur Mills and Dan Rostenkowski lost significant power when *they* got into dutch, and I believe their examples more typical than Marion Barry's. Probably depends on the politician. Louisiana's unbelievably crooked ex-governor, Edwin Edwards, is being talked up for another run at the mansion. || Oh, I love the Smithsonian mall! Hey, Baltimore's not very far from there, is it?

Better Late ... number 5 |Joell 65 legal briefs due in a 60-day span!?! That's not just overwork, that's *criminal* overwork. Raise hell! || Donna and Ken Amos host an annual Oscar party down here in New Orleans, in their handsome house festooned (marvelous word!) with photos and figures of afghan hounds. I look forward to this year's. || I'm glad you won't "commit" to voting for WigWam Village for the 2003 worldcon, since anyone who votes for it *should* be committed. May I humbly suggest CanCun as an alternative since you are *not* psychotic? || **Wag the Dog** was fairly funny,

although I remembered the basic plot schtick -- creating a war hero for p.r. purposes -- from a much better movie, **Don't Go Near the Water**. "*Hot and cold?*" || If you don't mind driving, you can both hear the Dalai Lama at Atlanta's Emory U graduation, and make DSC. They're only three hours apart.

Sailing the Abnormalcy #26 |Bryan| New Orleans has one of those enormous stadium-seating theatres, the Palace. It's spoiled me for other movie houses, a fact I didn't realize till I saw a flick in a regular theatre and had to keep shifting around to see past the bozo in front of me. Of course, the hugeness of the screen in the stadium dims the picture, but maybe they just don't darken the theatre enough. || Speaking of Marilyn Manson, what should appear in my mailbox on a recent day but a fanzine devoted to *Charles* Manson. The editor had read about my interview with Leslie Van Houten and wanted to trade. Included, a tape labelled "A Canadian Tribute to the Music of Charles Manson." I think I'll run screaming into the street now, thanks. || *Funny* skiing joke. || The thing to remember about the McDonald's coffee lawsuit was that the old lady plaintiff was very seriously burned and Mickey D's, as you say, knew the coffee was too hot *and* that their cup lids could fall off. I see little wrong with the lawsuit or the outcome. McDonald's knew they had a dangerous product, did nothing to fix the problem, injured someone and had to pay for it. Where's the beef? (That was *another* fast food outfit.) || Check out Jerry Page's article in **Chall #7** regarding Uri Geller. I love how the Amazing Randi threw a wrench into his act ... May I type up this anecdote in letter form so I can print it in **Chall #8**? || Even as revolted as I am by the Lewinsky brouhaha, I can't avoid grinning at some of the iconoclastic jokes. Reminds me of the great political cartoon that followed a William Safire attack on Hillary Clinton. The President admitted publically that he'd like to belt Safire in the chops. First picture: Safire with a black eye, captioned **William Safire after Bill Clinton heard about the Hillary remark**. *Second* picture: *Clinton* with a black eye, labelled **Bill Clinton after Hillary heard about Paula Jones**.

Notes from the Club Car 46 |Pat| \$\$\$ en route to bolster my account. || I envy you getting to watch Naomi make Rocky & Sue's wedding cake -- you saw genius at work -- but how awful it must have been to have smelled, but be unable to scarf. || Am counting on another tremendous trip report for your April/May trip to the U.K. Why don't you stand for TAFF one of these years? I'd like to see the TWGM find something they could gripe about with y'all! || I liked **Titanic** more the first time I saw it than the second, when the romance cloyed and the overacting, particularly by Billy Zane, irked. While the class warfare that was at the heart of the film's conflict was a real interest, there were more affecting **Titanic** issues to address, I think. I'd rather have spent more time with the actual passengers -- Guggenheim and Astor, for instance -- and tried to figure out how they could have made their supreme sacrifice to gentlemanly honor. You would behave so well, I'm sure ... but would I? **A Night to Remember** remains the great **Titanic** film, although there's no denying the technical accuracy -- the bonechilling realism -- of Cameron's sinking scene. I'm sure the flick has won the Oscar, but **L.A. Confidential** was better, and **The Sweet Hereafter** -- not even nominated -- was superior to both. || Louise Woodward's case is back in the news, with the state trying to have her life sentence reimposed. I hope it is not. || Consider yourself quoted on the WigWam for Worldcon question: "I hope you don't expect me to do any work". The bid motto is born!

The Muunie Bin |Sue Starkel| Hey, welcome! From the way you describe KAPA -- "it is about friendship, about relating to other members of the group, about books, movies, travel and other

interests" -- I'd say you had a good handle on what an apazine should be. I've been into the hobby since (blush) 1971, and I just love it. Hope you do too. || Nice reading about your wedding! Again, I wish I could have been there, even though I tend to out-green the evergreens with my envy, and blubber as much in self-pity as in happiness for the betrothed. Best to your bwah! || Where'd you go in California for Christmas? I have relatives in the high desert above L.A. and went to high school and college in the Bay Area. Pretty state, isn't it? That part of it that hasn't slid into the ocean this winter, thanks to El Nino.



This will have to be that for this issue of BLUEGRAS. Sad day for this lawyer; I had to plead a lady friend guilty of carjacking and see her sentenced to a long prison term ... but details of that nightmare can wait until the next CHALLENGER. In the meantime, I hope all of you are dealing well with the aforementioned El Nino, that spring comes soon in fact as well as in calendar, and that we're all here in the next KAPA with smilin' faces.

above illo by GREG SPAGNOLA